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CHALLENGE
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Private Lynch Refuses to Play Hero for Bush's Lies

The Bush Gang's script for their oil war on Iraq keeps getting re-written. They still can't find the "weapons of mass destruction" that supposedly triggered the invasion. Despite their state-of-the-art intelligence, they have yet to fulfill their promise to exterminate Saddam Hussein, George W.'s mini-me fascist. In and around Baghdad, the "liberated" Iraqis who were scripted to embrace U.S. soldiers on the streets are instead shooting them out of the sky.

And now, to add insult to the growing number of deaths and injuries in Iraq, the starring role of wartime icon has been rejected by the only person who can play it: Private Jessica Lynch.

Private Lynch was at the heart of the one "feel-good" story in a war that's gone terribly wrong for the U.S. ruling class. Her rescue from an Iraqi hospital in April was considered a turning point for Operation "Iraqi Freedom," a morale-booster for U.S. troops and for a skeptical public at home.

By the summer, however, it became clear that the rescue wasn't quite as dramatic as U.S. government sources — and the liberal media, notably The Washington Post and The New York Times — had painted it. It turned out there was no resistance within Saddam General Hospital in Nasiriya; the Baath Party and Fedayeen Saddam paramilitary had cleared out at least a day before. No one remained but doctors, nurses and wounded Iraqis, many of them civilian casualties of the U.S. "smart" bombs. Iraqi medical personnel willingly led U.S. special op forces to Private Lynch. The "daring raid" was staged.

For the Bush Gang, it gets even worse. With Private Lynch's book ("I Am a Soldier, Too") set for a Veteran's Day release, she's begun speaking up — and she keeps deviating from her lines. Private Lynch is offended by early reports that she'd kept firing at her attackers until her ammunition ran out, and that she'd suffered knife and bullet wounds in the battle. In fact, Lynch's gun jammed before she got off a single round; her injuries were sustained when her Humvee crashed into another vehicle.

Lynch says she resents the military for videotaping the rescue (with a carefully edited version going to the media), and

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Soon after 1949, when the Chinese Communist Red Army defeated the U.S.-armed Chiang Kai-shek fascists, U.S. Cold Warriors pointed fingers at each other, asking, "Who Lost China?" Now they're doing the same thing in Iraq. In an editorial titled "Iraq Goes Sour," The New York Times (11/16) blames the Bushites for the Iraq disaster and for "quitting," by looking for an exit plan from this mess. The liberals at the Times and Democratic Party presidential candidates Dean, Clark, Gephardt, Kerrey, et al, are calling for the UN to head the operation, which the Bush Neo-Con gang has opposed from the get-go. So far, most U.S. "allies" (the latest being Turkey and Japan) are vacillating over sending troops to Iraq.

The Bush gang's swift victory and promised "cake-walk" has turned into a major quagmire and everyone's talking about "another Vietnam." White House lies and deception over going to war, beginning with the Weapons of Mass Destruction "threat," have backfired.

Now it's revealed that earlier this year Saddam Hussein offered a deal, basically agreeing to most U.S. demands, but Bush rejected it. The NY Times commented (11/7): "Administration officials were fond of saying that there were things Bush officials knew but could not share with the public. Little did we imagine that among those things was an offer that might have provided a way to avoid the war."

The Bushites underestimated the will of Saddam and other Arab bosses to control the region's oil profits for themselves. Now not only is the world's "only superpower" currently losing to what Rumsfeld calls a "ragtag leftover" of Baath Party loyalists and Jihadists (holy warriors), but it's also being discredited worldwide and at home. U.S. polls indicate the public is slowly but surely coming to the conclusion that Iraq "was a mistake."

Mao Tse-Tung said years ago that U.S. imperialism is a "paper tiger" strategically, but capable of inflicting tremendous damage. The Pentagon still has the world's largest arsenal, with hi-tech weapons and a budget surpassing those of the top imperialist powers combined, but is still suffering from the Vietnam Syndrome. U.S. soldiers are still not committed to die for Halliburton, Exxon-Mobil and U.S. imperialism in general.

U.S. deaths since the war began passed 400 with the latest loss of two Black Hawk helicopters. Casualties total 9,000. Medact, a medical aid organization, reported that Iraqi civilian deaths

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EDITORIAL: Liberals' Solution: More Troops to Iraq

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could be as high as 55,000.

A New York Times editorial (11/17) said Afghanistan, where Bush's "war on terror" began, is as serious as Iraq. U.S. soldiers are being killed there almost daily and the Taliban is returning with a vengeance. The areas not yet recaptured by the Taliban and its allies, are run by warlords who profit from the enormous heroin trade. The U.S. puppet President Karzai barely runs his compound in Kabul.

As a wounded tiger, the U.S. will try to lash out at its enemies with even more deadly "shock and awe." Again civilian targets are being bombed in Iraq. In desperation Syria could be the next target, maybe even attacked by Sharon. Eventually, millions will die in the endless wars U.S. bosses will wage to control Persian Gulf oil, still the most abundant and cheapest to produce worldwide. U.S. control of this oil is a crucial weapon against rising imperialist powers, especially China, which will soon surpass Japan as the world's second largest oil consumer. The other imperialists, though still not strong enough to confront the U.S. directly, will not play second fiddle forever. This inter-imperialist rivalry will lead to more and even bigger wars.

"As a wounded tiger, the U.S. will try to lash out at its enemies with even more deadly 'shock and awe.'"

This is the future world capitalism has in store for workers, youth and soldiers worldwide. Historically, imperialist wars have opened the door to communist revolution. World War I led to the 1917 Russian revolution. World War II produced the Chinese Revolution. The Soviet and Chinese Red Armies and the communist-led partisans from France to Italy to Yugoslavia to Albania led the defeat of the Nazi and Japanese fascists. We in PLP are small in number today, but we can grow into a mass revolutionary party and win workers and soldiers worldwide to turn imperialist butchery into mass revolutionary struggle. There's no other way out.✪

Pvt. Lynch Won't Play Bush's Hero

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generally for manipulating and over-dramatizing her story: "They used me as a way to symbolize all this stuff."

Like many young working-class people who have come of age in a period without a mass anti-imperialist movement, Lynch doesn't have an especially sharp analysis of who her enemies are. She continues to refer to the Iraqi doctors and nurses who saved her life as "the enemy." But it's a measure of Lynch's disaffection — and the alienation of tens of millions of American youth much like her — that she wants no part of this morality play. She could have become the smiling, blond poster child for U.S. imperialism, no doubt set for life. Instead, she's bringing down the curtain on at least one small part of the rulers' charade, a braver act than anything she did in the desert. For that she deserves congratulations instead of the skepticism in the New York Times article about her book.

In Lynch's refusal to play the hero game for Bush's imperialist murders and lies, she exposes the political weakness of the bosses' military. All the technology in the world doesn't guarantee that working-class troops will fight and die for the profit system. Lynch's courage should inspire our Party to intensify its organizing among working-class soldiers. We need to provide them with a new script — for communist revolution.✪

Racism Stalks Wounded Black GI

As the body counts mount on all sides in Operation Iraqi Conquest, Shoshana Johnson, another wounded member of Lynch's ambushed unit, has her own problems. Johnson was shot through both legs and held prisoner in Iraq for 22 days. She still walks with a limp, cannot stand for long periods, and is plagued by insomnia and depression. She's in no shape to support her three-year-old daughter. But where Lynch received an 80% disability benefit, Johnson is getting only a 30% benefit — about $700 a month less.

Why the difference? Why is Jessica Lynch a household name, while Shoshana Johnson has been virtually ignored by both the government and the media? Could it be because Johnson is black — and black women rarely get cast for the bosses' really big productions?

Hard for GI's to Find 'Good Side' of U.S. Imperialist War

My friends in a National Guard unit are getting ready to deploy to the Persian Gulf soon for a year. Rumors have been circulating for months but this time the word came from the brass.

One soldier excitedly told me, "Hey, by the time we come back we'll have, like, 30 Gs." I didn't want to dampen his enthusiasm but I couldn't lie. "The money isn't worth it and you know it," I told him. I know it," he griped, "but I was trying to look on the bright side of things. Now you got me all depressed."

The truth doesn't have to make soldiers depressed. The bosses want us to have things to "look forward to" in order to retain our loyalty to their army. But recognizing the despair of profit wars can help us see the necessity to fight the bosses. There's no bright side to occupying land for control of oil profits. U.S. rulers need to murder Iraqi workers and put U.S. soldiers in harm's way in order to protect their wealth. Realizing the army only cares about money, not human needs, can lead soldiers to be won to the fight for communism, a society that does meet human needs. The struggle for communism by soldiers on the battlefield can be a source of hope.

My friend is not the only one trying to make the best out of a bad situation. Another friend just finished three years on active duty. He joined the Guard for the educational benefits and it was his second drill when the brass laid down the news to us. "Man this sucks," he muttered. "I just got back home and started school." He wanted to get out of the army the previous drill for mainly personal reasons, but also because the work was unrewarding and seemingly useless. He eventually decided to stay in. But when he heard the news about being deployed, he reasoned, "Well, at least now we'd be doing some real work."

Like most soldiers both my friends are trying to find a good side to going to war. "I completely disagree with this war and why we're over there," my friend said, "but we're going, you know, so you have to see the positive side of it." The dread of separation from loved ones, the heat in Iraq and removal from jobs and schools is part of the reason that finding something to look forward to is appealing. But at the same time, many soldiers recognize this war is not in our interest. Anger at Bush and our commanders as well as the simple recognition that "this sucks" shows that thinking among soldiers is divided.

As long as working-class soldiers see being deployed as a chance to make money, do useful work or be promoted, they'll be won to the war, however much against their interests it may be. Recognizing that oil profits and occupation aren't worth fighting for helps us see that fighting for communism, a society based on the interests of the working class, is something worth looking forward to.

A Comrade

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

✪PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

✪Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✪Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

✪Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✪Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✪Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✪Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!

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Workers Hit Fascist Sellout of LA Transit Strike

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 17 — At this juncture, transit strikers are being called back to work based on an agreement between the union leadership and the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). Workers don't yet know the details but the health plan, the main issue, is to be decided by a judge after they're back working. Many are refusing to return until they hear the gory details. Others are urging a "no" vote on the contract.

The union leadership and the MTA Board praised this "victory," saying the "hero" of the settlement is Antonio Villaraigosa, a key liberal Democratic politician here. After all the sacrifices by workers and their families, the union president praised this boss-loving politician as their "savior." Villaraigosa was barred from participation on the MTA Board because he had received union money, but the courts lifted the ban so that he could support a settlement sending the strikers back to work while the health care issue is "arbitrated," again by a pro-capitalist judge.

The LA Times is calling on Villaraigosa to press for permanent binding arbitration, outlawing future transit strikes. The union president is delivering workers to the liberal rulers and an increasingly fascist system of exploitation and war that the workers oppose. The union leaders are supporting the side that wants to outlaw strikes. It's like saying, "go into the Nazi labor camps quietly, for a good rest."

But class consciousness has definitely grown among workers and students. Strikers turned away scab buses at one division while others organized to find and stop more. Uniting as a class to exercise our power against the scabs goes hand in hand with the need to unite against the bosses' profit system that creates growing poverty for the many. Strikers said an active rank and file must build ties with workers at other bus companies. They say that striking with the union hacks at the helm is like fighting with both hands tied behind your back.

During the strike, many more workers received PLP's revolutionary ideas, even more than in the 2000 drivers' strike. Meanwhile, strikers have organized activities independently of the treacherous union leaders. They're advocating leading strikes and wildcats, and breaking the bosses' laws. More workers are taking revolutionary ideas as their own.

If the MTA gets its way, mechanics will have to pay for most of their own health care, as do the mostly black First Transit drivers. The latter receive racist poverty wages. MTA retirees' benefits would be cut 75%. If the supermarkets get their way, the striking grocery workers will have to pay 50% more for their health benefits.

MORE GUNS, LESS BUTTER

In Nazi Germany, all sorts of extra costs were attached to workers' wages to pay for the rulers' war machine. As Germany moved to a war economy, workers paid increased taxes, made forced charity contributions and suffered severe cuts in social benefits. As the Nazis cheapened wages, they cheapened life itself, a picture emerging increasingly in the U.S.

In the U.S., nearly 100,000 people die annually from lack of medical care, either uninsured or under-insured. (New England Journal of Medicine study, 1997)

Those 100,000 dying every year means over 600,000 dead since the report was published. That rate compares with U.S. combat deaths during World War II. That *is* war — *class war*! This serious death toll is downplayed by the Democrats (who push a single-payer health rationing scheme), ignored by the media (who concentrate on the 3,000 killed on Sept. 11).

Thus, these strikes are more than "industrial disputes." They're fights against the growth of fascism and continual war. The union leaders, the media and the Democrats resist seeing things this way with all their might. They want to lock workers into narrow trade union reformism. PLP strives to fight these attacks in a way that raises revolutionary consciousness among our co-workers. The lasting victory in these strikes will be greater understanding among more workers of the need to destroy fascism and wars for profit by destroying capitalism with communist revolution for workers' power.✪

150,000 in General Strike vs. S. Korea's Fascist Labor Laws

On Nov.12, 150,000 auto, steel, textile and chemical workers held a one-day general strike in 21 South Korean cities to protest the government's fascist anti-worker laws. This demonstration followed a Nov. 9 battle provoked by the government when 35,000 workers armed with steel pipes fought pitched battles with cops; 130 were arrested, 100 injured and one worker remains in a coma.

The workers were protesting the "provision seizure" law, among others, which allows corporations to seize assets of union officials and garnishee up to 50% of a worker's wages to recover company "losses" from "illegal" strikes. Workers now face indemnity suits totaling $10 million. This includes seizing assets of strike organizers.

Now the government is drafting even more fascistic laws. They will widen the circumstances under which bosses can lock out workers; allow "public" corporations and others deemed "essential" to hire scabs during strikes; lift criminal penalties for bosses accused of wrongful termination of workers, making it easier to fire them; and bar protests by any group said to have organized "illegal" violent demonstrations in the past. That would virtually ban all protests.

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), which called the Nov. 12 general strike, is seeing their "chickens coming home to roost." Originally they had supported the 1998 election of Kim Dae-jung as a "democrat." Kim then immediately enforced demands of the IMF, amended the country's labor laws and privatized state-owned enterprises. Then the KCTU backed Roh Moo-hyan (who Kim had jailed) as another "pro-democrat" and it is Roh as the current president who is now imposing fascism on Korea's working class.Recently masses of workers and students demonstrated against sending troops to Iraq.

The role of these union leaders matches the AFL-CIO traitors in the U.S. who push workers into the arms of the liberal Democrats as the "solution" to the problems caused by capitalism. They help lay a fascist trap for the working class in the name of "democracy." It is only communists who have historically led the fight to smash fascism. Such a revolutionary party is needed in Korea to lead workers to the only solution — communism.✪

Workers Balk At Mass Layoff That Pays For Bosses' War

"He was a glutton for punishment," an industrial worker friend told our CHALLENGE 40th anniversary dinner, describing the boss at a meeting the week before in a nearby industrial plant. Like many prior plant meetings, workers lambasted the boss with accusatory "questions." This meeting was particularly hostile. Then something happened for the first time — workers walked out on him.

"I wish they hadn't done that," the boss said to the remaining majority, "you have to face reality." His "reality" included a plan to cut one-third of our jobs within the year. But that was only Phase I. Phase II envisions shifting more manufacturing jobs to lower-wage war subcontractors and non-union plants. But not to worry; he and his management flunkies were "going to help us through this journey."

"Isn't that what the clergy say when you're going to die," asked a particularly irked mechanic.

The Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), a military think-tank, spells out the "journey" the bosses have in mind. An ICAF report on Advanced Manufacturing, a necessity for the bosses' strategy of continuous war, praises companies that "[focus] on cost-cutting efficiencies [including] out-sourcing … supply chain integration and Enterprise Resource Planning." Translation: cut industrial workers' wages to support the enormous cost of the bosses' wars.

We must build an alternate reality, to smash a system that can't provide decent jobs but wages increasingly expensive wars to secure their dominance. Start on this journey by distributing this paper to your friends and co-workers. The journey we have in mind ends with workers' power.✪

U.S., Russian Oil Bosses Have Georgia on Their Minds

Georgia, a former Soviet republic, mirrors the horrors and chaos "free market" capitalism has brought to all the former Republics. Georgian President Shevardnadze, Gorbachev's foreign minister in the last years of the former Soviet Union, was accused of fraud in the Nov. 2 legislative elections. His ruling New Georgia Party claimed victory with only 20% of the votes, according to all observers. The U.S. has been a key supporter of Shevardnadze, including Sen. John McCain and Daddy Bush's Secretary of State James Baker and Clinton's Asst. Secy. of State Strobe Talbott.

The opposition held mass protests in the capital city of Tsiblis demanding Shevardnadze's resignation and new elections. The protestors even blockaded troop trains. On Nov. 18, pro-government forces rallied demanding harsh measures against the opposition. The potential of civil war could add even more chaos to Central Asia, a key geopolitical region for the U.S., Russia and other imperialists.

Shevardnadze & Co. want to reap the profits from the oil and pipeline business, especially the planned U.S. sponsored TBC pipeline from the oil port of Baku in the Caspian Sea, through Georgia, to the Turkish port of Ceyhan. TBC would cost $3.5 billion and run through some of the world's most dangerous regions, where local wars rage.

TBC will transport oil from two other former Soviet republics, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, sidestepping Iran. U.S. oil companies plan to break the monopoly currently enjoyed by Russian energy companies with a parallel gas pipeline, to be finished by 2007. The deal was sealed with a U.S.-Georgia military pact this year.

The TBC deal brings lots of investments and money to Georgia in exchange for pipeline rights. Georgia's GDP has grown to 8.6% a year, but it all goes to the oil bosses and the corrupt New Georgia officials. This has increased the masses' hatred of the government.

Russian bosses control Georgia's domestic energy market and 75% of its electrical network. Russia cancelled Georgia's debt when it was part of the Soviet Union to continue its control. Gazprom — the Russian gas giant — signed a deal with Georgia to monopolize the domestic market.

Both the U.S. and Russia are pressing for a deal with the opposition, Shevardnadze has made a deal with the party led by Aslan Abashidze, a right-wing warlord in the Akharia province. But so far Shevardnadze and the rest of the opposition are not making any concessions to each other. Many fear a civil war could erupt if no deal is made.

Bush and Putin say they're worried about events in Georgia, but they are both responsible. U.S. and Russian oil bosses don't care who has power, as long as their own interests are protected. But in an imperialist-capitalist world, fights among local bosses end up affecting the geopolitical interests of the big powers.

Free market capitalism has been hell for the workers of the former Soviet Republics. Many look at the former Soviet Union as the "good old days." But we don't need the state capitalism of Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev. We need to eliminate all forms of capitalism and build a communist society.✪

Dominican Workers Strike Against Paying More For Bosses' Crisis

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic, Nov. 11 — Thousands of workers, students and farmworkers, led by unions and other mass organizations, participated in a 24-hour general strike that shut down this Caribbean country. President Hipolito Mejia's army and goons attacked the protestors, killing seven and injuring and arresting dozens more.

The exploited masses here, as in Bolivia several weeks ago, are sick and tired of paying for the crisis and corruption of capitalism spawning more blackouts and thousands of job losses in the local maquiladora industry. The opposition Liberation Party's (PLD) candidate for the 2004 presidential election, former president Leonel Fernández, is trying to use the anger of the masses to return to power. But under that PLD government all public enterprises — from the electric utilities to public health — were privatized. Conditions are worse under the current government because of corruption, imperialism's greed for more profits and the international crisis of capitalism. But no help has come from the White House.

Just this year, three banks went bankrupt, including the country's second largest. The bankers stole $4.2 billion. This, plus the austerity policies demanded by the IMF and the World Bank, has generated even more misery for most people. The population is surviving from money sent by Dominican immigrants in the U.S. and Europe, who make heavy personal sacrifices from their low-wage jobs to help relatives back home.

Contrary to the reformists organizing the strike, who gave the government a month to respond to their demands, PLP participants told the masses that capitalism causes exploitation, repression and war (President Mejia sent 300 Dominican soldiers to the imperialist occupation of Iraq). The problem is not only high food prices, unemployment, blackouts and crooked politicians. It's the system itself. During the strike, we made contacts with many angry workers who can't take it anymore. We're working with them to win them to our Party. This would be a real victory from such struggles: turn them into schools for communism and build a mass revolutionary PLP.✪

Many Wars—Same Story

MILITARY FAMILIES & VETERANS say
BRING THEM HOME NOW!
FREE STEPHEN FUNK
END THE ABUSE
SUPPORT OUR TROOPS
END THE ABUSE BRING THEM HOME NOW

I've been working with some anti-war veterans' groups for several years. They've realized they've been lied to and abandoned by the government but still believe politicians will help to relieve their medical and economic suffering. However, these vets are also rapidly advancing politically, understanding how imperialism has used them, so they're taking to the streets and uniting with other groups to stop the slaughter in Iraq.

The last two years I marched with them in the Veterans' Day Parades. This year's was the largest of all, with many more marching bands, floats and weapons. Some vets speculated the large parade was due to the situation in Iraq and a probable military draft after the 2004 elections. Our anti-war group was relegated to the back of the parade so before we marched we had lots of time for discussions among ourselves and with others interested in our stories.

One Gulf War Vet said the military had a new strategy to turn the policing over to Iraqis and special forces units, allowing some troops to return home. A Vietnam Vet noted they'd tried the same thing in Vietnam and when the casualties rose, they used special forces to burn villages to "protect people from terrorists" and set up concentration camps for those who resisted the occupation.

As a Korean war vet who'd seen similar tactics there, I said we'd been sent as a UN "police-action" force and today, 50 years later, there are still 37,000 troops there protecting U.S. interests in the Far East. I commented that the Middle East is even more strategic to the U.S. empire and those who think U.S. rulers will end their occupation of Iraq better look at what's still happening in Korea and what happened in Vietnam where "our government" fought till the last drop of our vet's blood to occupy that country.

When we finally started marching, I noticed many people waving and cheering. I thought it was for some soldiers with big guns and camouflaged faces that I'd seen earlier. But surprisingly there was half a block separating our group from the pro-war, patriotic parade. Their plan succeeded. However, we soon realized the crowd was waving and cheering for us and our anti-war chants: "No more Vietnams, No Blood For Oil, Bring the Troops Home Now - Alive!"; Vets Need Jobs and Medical Care, Not Parades; and, Warmongers Don't Get Killed - They Get Rich."

As support for us continued, block after block, some of us went to the barriers to shake hands and be hugged by a crowd that we later estimated at least 50% supportive.

I'll keep working with these vets to build a movement that doesn't rely on politicians and fights to shut down this war and imperialism for good.

Korean War Vet

The Most Important Event of the 20th Century

Eighty-six years ago, November 7, 1917, marked the beginning of the single most important event of the 20th century, the Bolshevik revolution. The working class of Russia, led by the revolutionary communists of the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Vladimir Lenin, freed 1/6 of the world's surface from the yoke of capitalism. They proved once and for all that it was possible to create a world without exploitation, a world where those who produce all value, the working class, can enjoy the fruits of their labor instead of having it stolen by a few parasitical bosses and their lackeys. The Soviet Union not only freed workers but also fought racism and liberated women from capitalist, feudal and religious oppression. Women from the Ukraine to the Asian Soviet republics were no longer slaves to religious obscurantism. Prostitution was unknown. Unemployment was eliminated.

The revolution frightened the world's bosses, who immediately sent armies from 17 countries to try to stop it in its infancy. From 1918 to 1925, millions of workers led by the Red Army fought the world's imperialist armies and their local lackeys. Nearly five million died to defeat the enemy, many of whom were the most committed workers the revolution had produced. Lenin himself died because of injuries inflicted by a hired killer.

But the revolution continued. When the entire capitalist world sank into depression, and millions worldwide were left jobless and starving (much like today), the Soviet Union was forging ahead building a new society without unemployment and hunger.

In 1941, the bosses again tried to destroy the revolution. Hitler, using all of Europe's resources and the largest military machine ever assembled, invaded the Soviet Union with four million soldiers. At first, the world's bosses gleefully believed the Nazis would destroy the Soviet Union. U.S. Senator Harry Truman, later to become President, himself said, "Let Germany and the Soviets bleed each other to death." But the Soviets, knowing the fascist Axis wanted the whole world for themselves, and understanding the nature of imperialist rivalry, realized that eventually the West and Hitler could be fighting each other.

Finally, the main bosses in the U.S. and UK decided that the Hitler-Mussolini-Tojo Axis was the big immediate danger to them. The pro-Hitler forces in the U.S. and Britain — like Henry Ford and many in the British royalty—were isolated. But many U.S. companies like Ford, GM and IBM continued doing business with the Nazis while U.S. and German bankers met in "neutral" Switzerland during the war, planning for a post-war division of the spoils.

The Nazis invasion of the Soviet Union was no pushover as occurred in Western Europe. All the Quislings (pro-fascist traitors) had been eliminated, and any Japanese fascists' attempt to seize the Soviet rear (Siberia and Mongolia) was crushed in a brief but bloody 1939 conflict, before the Nazis invaded Poland (see CHALLENGE, 11/5).

Still, it wasn't until the Nazis were on the run following their defeats at Stalingrad and in the Battle of the Kursk (the biggest armored battle of modern history involving millions of soldiers and 6,000 tanks) that the U.S.-UK forces invaded Western Europe (June 6, 1944). The defeat of the Nazis, mostly by the Red Army, was the second most important event of the 20th century.

But this victory was very costly. The Nazis murdered over 20 million Soviet citizens, including many of the most committed and revolutionary workers. The Soviet leaders knew that the dropping of the A-Bomb on a defeated Japan was really a warning to them. The Soviets answered the Cold War by re-building the country and turning it into a mighty power. Many, including Stalin in his last writings and in the last Party Congress before his death, realized the new Soviet state had many political shortcomings, including an ideological weakness among the Party members. Once Stalin died, those weaknesses were used by Krushchev to turn the Soviet Union into its opposite, eventually leading to Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Putin.

Today there is no socialist camp. No country is ruled by revolutionary communists. But this is a temporary historical setback. We in PLP are learning from their mistakes and vow to lead the new mass wave of revolutionary struggles towards communism, a society where workers produce for their needs, not for the profits of a few. It won't be an easy struggle, but it is the only way out workers have to end this capitalist hell of endless wars, racist/fascist terror, mass unemployment, starvation and poverty. Fight for communism!

The Great Flint Sit-Down Strike: WITH BABIES AND BANNERS

Our union showed the movie "With Babies and Banners," a 45 minute documentary about the heroic role women played in the victory of the 1936-37 Sit-down Strike against General Motors in Flint, Michigan.

In December 1936, the seventh year of the Great Depression, workers faced massive unemployment, had no unemployment insurance, no health insurance, no welfare and no Social Security. Segregation and elitism characterized the craft-dominated American Federation of Labor. GM owned Flint and controlled Michigan's Governor as well, believing that "what's good for GM is good for the country."

Workers had no safety equipment, came home with burned backs and swollen fingers, so tired that all they could do was eat and sleep. These conditions spawned anger and resentment.

Members of the Communist Party (CP) played a major role in creating the United Auto Workers Union (UAW) and the Flint Sit-down. Six of the seven members of the overall Strike Committee were communists.

The UAW, part of the newly organized Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), championed industrial unionism, uniting black and white, men and women, skilled and unskilled into one union.

Union organizing was dangerous and had to be done secretly. A worker caught with a union card was immediately fired. Stoolpigeons abounded. GM bosses told the wives that their husbands went to pool halls instead of union meetings. Women were isolated at home, caring for children.

The strike began on December 30, 1936, at Fisher Body No. 1. Women working in the plant left; only men stayed. As word spread, wives came down to ask why their husbands weren't coming home. Several wives persuaded their husbands to leave, but many others organized the Women's Emergency Brigade to support the strike.

Initially they only cooked and took food to the strikers. But soon women sought a more active role. The Emergency Brigade organized a children's picket line, drawing national attention. That brought in food, money and bodies to walk the picket line. A daycare center was organized at the union hall, freeing women for picket duty. They wore red berets to establish their organized presence.

The Battle of Bulls Run

The turning point for the Emergency Brigade occurred soon afterwards. The police had surrounded Fisher No. 1, hurling teargas to smoke out the strikers. Unarmed workers inside threw the canisters back at the cops and then turned hoses on them! A huge crowd formed at the battle scene. Brigade leader Genora Johnson scrambled atop a car and appealed to the women of Flint to stand with their men. The police opened fire, but the women, armed with clubs, broke through the police lines, marching into the very center of the battle. The cops retreated.

Bonfires lit up the night as the women stood guard against more attacks by GM goons and the cops. Several women had blackjacks hidden in their coats. The workers' victory at the "Battle of Bulls Run" (it was called that because the "Bulls" had run), inspired many unions to support the strike. Workers' Committees inside the plant organized exercise programs, sports, cultural events, plays, a "Living Newspaper" reporting daily activities, meetings, dancing and games to keep spirits up. Wives and children would visit factory gates, talking to their husbands at plant windows.

Growing desperate, GM turned off the heat and water and forced Michigan's Governor to order in the National Guard. It was time for the strikers to return to the offensive.

Chevy plant No. 4 manufactured engines for all GM cars. Shutting No. 4 would tie up GM nationally. Knowing a stool pigeon worked in Chevy No. 9, organizers leaked that as "the next target." GM's goons and the cops descended on No. 9. But squads of workers secretly left that plant, went to Chevy No. 6, picking up all its workers to go shut the now unguarded No. 4, the real target. Meanwhile, the Emergency Brigade was dispatched to guard No. 4. When the police finally caught on and raced to No. 4, the women stalled them long enough for thousands of workers to come from the union hall and later from all over the Mid-West to ring the plant. The workers inside threatened to destroy the billion dollars worth of machinery if the National Guard was ordered to attack. GM gave up. A union agreement was signed on February 11, 1937. The UAW was born.

The Emergency Brigade was one of the strike's backbones. It gave men a different outlook and deepened their respect for working women. Conditions improved dramatically. The workers won a wage increase, the 8-hour day and union recognition.

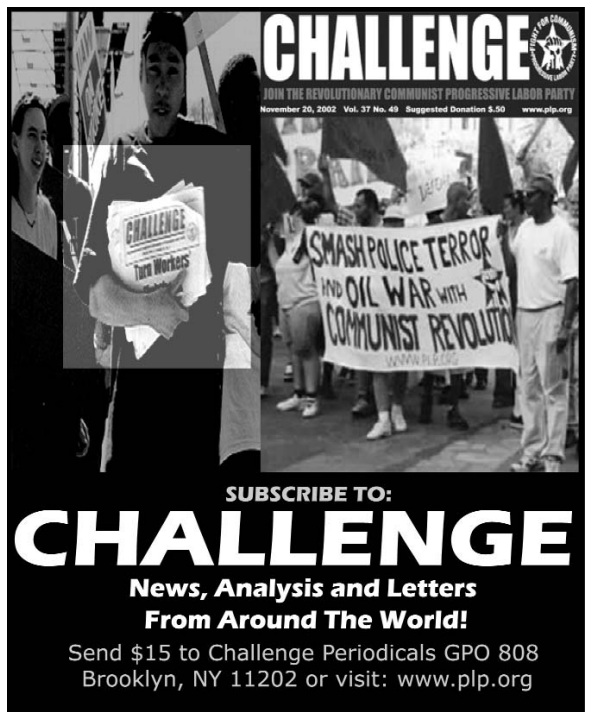
The Flint Sit-Down inspired hundreds of others nation-wide and gave birth to CIO unions in the electrical, rubber and steel industries. U.S. Steel gave up without a strike. Flint showed that women were ready to sacrifice their lives to better working conditions for all workers. Ironically, at the UAW's 40th Anniversary celebration of the Flint Sit-down, women had to fight to get a speaker on the program.

Although the CP gave outstanding leadership to the strike itself, its outlook emphasized militant reform. Its primary outlook was not one of winning workers to communist revolution. Given the great respect the workers had for communists then, a huge base for communist ideas about the need for revolution could have been built. The CP — and the workers — would pay for this weakness in ten short years when UAW president Walter Reuther, aided by the government, the auto bosses, McCarthyism and the anti-communism of the Cold War, was able to oust the communists from union leadership and even from the plants. The communists fought back on the basis of "free speech" but this could not overcome the virulent red-baiting. Had they built a revolutionary communist base from the get-go and thereby recruited thousands to the party, the drive to oust them from the union and the plants would have been a monumental battle. And even if the leaders still had been forced out, there would have been thousands of new recruits to carry on and raise the stakes of the class struggle.

Still, "With Babies and Banners" is very inspiring. Workers viewing it thought it very informative, sad (the horrible working conditions) and were elated about the role women played. A group of high school girls present said "those women really kicked ass!"

(The video version of this film is available from New Day Films — www.newday.com A PLP pamphlet — The Great Flint Sit-down Strike Against GM — can be found on the PLP website, plp.org)✪

LETTERS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CHALLENGE in Japanese

My friends and I translated [into Japanese] your recent article on why the U.S. dropped A-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (CHALLENGE, 9/10/03). We thought it was very well-researched and presented an excellent analysis of what was perhaps the first major atrocity perpetrated by the U.S. as a super-power — as the new strongest imperialist power — bent on world domination at all costs, in this case costing the lives of tens of thousands of innocent civilians.

We hope you can post the article as is, in Japanese, on your website, and if possible, to print it in CHALLENGE in Japanese as an indication to Japanese readers that the Party has friends in Japan. It will also be circulated in Japan and in neighborhoods in the U.S. where Japanese is spoken.

We intend to translate other articles to create a Japanese version of CHALLENGE in Japan.

The working class in Japan is in dire need of your analysis and Party activity. Conditions here are at their worst since the U.S. occupation ended. With unemployment and homelessness at a post-occupation peak, some 35,000 people committed suicide in 2002. The national government and Tokyo State government are headed by open fascists eager to have Japan fully rearm with nuclear weapons. The current Korean crisis may give them that pretext. The Japanese imperialists want to prevent their Chinese counterparts from taking over as the dominant economic power in Asia. Your internationalist, revolutionary line is needed more than ever.

A loyal reader

Teachers' Union Hack Serves Rulers

"We want knowledgeable students who will end up committed to a system that acknowledges the weaknesses and tries to fix them," declared President Sandra Feldman of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). She was touting a recent survey that showed that youth who had taken a high school civics class were far more likely to follow politics, vote, volunteer, and participate in campaigns than youth who hadn't.

Feldman's words got me thinking about the AFT local at my school. People are very critical of the health insurance givebacks that the union got us to accept. We resented the union rep who told us to ration our own health care ("be better consumers") to keep down the cost to the district. But many of the same people were delighted with the union when it organized thousands of students to march against racist budget cuts. They are happy that the AFT is supporting the grocery workers' strike. Our local has even hired a full time organizer to coordinate efforts of part time paid staff to continue to organize students and faculty.

This seems contradictory. The AFT urges passivity around bread-and-butter contract issues but activity, alongside black latin and immigrant youth (to whom the AFT leadership historically has showed only contempt) in fighting around issues that directly affect the students.

But this contradiction is explained by the analysis in the CHALLENGE editorial (Nov 5) of "labor's new strategy". The AFT really can't expect to buy teachers' loyalty to capitalism with crumbs that have already been swept off the table in the imperialist drive to war (which Feldman consistently supports). Instead, the AFT now presents the bloody racist horrors of capitalism as "weaknesses" and pushes us and our students to use elections to try to "fix" them. The message of the rally against budget cuts was that we must accept "fair" cuts and rely on our "friends" in the state capital, so "get out the vote." The "new strategy", as Challenge says, is class collaboration, nationalism and support for imperialist war and capitalism.

This analysis means I must change the way I talk to my friends about what's wrong with unions. I need to be more careful not to imply that organizing more militant struggle (which the AFT won't do) would likely result in significantly more gains for teachers and students. Yes, we need to fight for our class interests against those of the bureaucrats, bankers, and bond raters. We need to advance peoples' understanding of capitalism as we explain that this isn't a period when we can win big, costly reforms but fighting against the bosses' attacks can show us the way to fight against a capitalist system hell bent on war and fascism.

I need to explain more clearly that when liberals in the AFT and other unions like SEIU and HERE organize political struggles, they are serving the rulers and not the working class. The rulers state openly that they need for workers to sacrifice "blood and treasure". They are using these union leaders to try to convince us to passively accept attacks on us and limit ourselves to looking for pennies and lesser evil politicians.

Finally, all of us in schools need to keep constantly in sight the struggle over the class content of education. It's not only in Feldman's beloved civics classes that the bosses' ideology is force fed to working class students. Some of the most active AFT organizers I know, including some militants and "progressives" have also pushed students hard into electoral politics and nationalism. We must take on these illusions and fight to show that revolutionary change is what we need.

A red teacher

Is CHALLENGE Moving To the Right?

In the Sept. 24 issue of Challenge was an article from Chicago on P. 5 titled "Chicago County Hospitals are Really Sick." The primary emphasis the article makes is that comrades should work and be active on reforms to win communism. It cites the bad conditions affecting both workers and patients such as:

Workers fired for being sick;... vacated positions not filled or eliminated; promotions based on favoritism; over-filled emergency rooms, lack of medications, etc., etc.

All this and more are elaborated to take about 75% of the article. In the last paragraph (about the remaining 25%) is:

"We need more direct work actions instead of waiting weeks and months under the grievance system." (Challenge helps keep the readers focused on and encouraging the working on reforms by repeating this quote in big black letters in the center of the article across two columns). "In the struggle for decent health care for our patients, a safe workplace and jobs that can provide for our families, we can help workers understand capitalism and learn how communism will provide jobs and health care for all."

This is very much a mirror of articles PLP was writing in the past when it was championing reforms as the way to communism, including the one or two last sentences of how great communism is.

Disturbing as the article may be, we know that here and there working primarily on reform will be raised. But there is something more troublesome and ominous here such as:

(1) The editors of Challenge in printing such an article approves and encourages such individuals and groups planning activity overwhelmingly reform throughout its readership,

(2) It has been almost three months now and at least three issues of Challenge since the article was written. There has not been a single public word from either the local, regional, city or national leadership (and membership) about this.

Such a total lack of response is a leg up for PLP moving to the right. With such publications and "attention," [can] anyone believe it can't happen?

NYC Comrade

CHALLENGE COMMENT: We thank the NYC comrade for his criticism of the article he cites. He is correct in saying it was reformist. It should have been returned to the writers involved in the struggle pointing that out. We receive numbers of articles parts of which reflect such views and we either discuss them with the writers and/or return them for more work. We should have done that with this one. The struggle against reformism must occur all the time.

If this article reflected the content in most or much of the articles in CHALLENGE, and the editors and leadership of the Party did nothing to change it, one could certainly conclude that it reflects "a leg up for PLP moving to the right." But based on what actually DOES appear in our pages, we think the criticism is extraordinarily one-sided. In reviewing just the three issues of the paper following the Sept. 24 issue, we find the following:

Oct. 8 — The liberal Clark exposed as a warmaker; the AFL-CIO leadership indicted as using immigrants to back the ruling class's need for war; the liberal "Anti-Globalists Don't See Capitalism as Root of Super-exploitation; "Third Way Won't Solve Salvadoran Workers' Problems" which concludes that "PLP's goal is to stoke the fires of workers' anger....within the unions and mass movements...to win the workers to take power through a revolution for communism"; and a back-page article putting forth why communism is the only answer to "Capitalism's Chamber of Horrors" and explains, among other things, that, "Making revolution requires winning hundreds of millions of workers to fight for it," and "The working class needs a Party and its Party needs leadership," and, "We have a job to do: to bring revolutionary class consciousness into the mass movements and win political leadership of workers and others.

Oct. 22 — A detailed description of a struggle in which parents defended a PL teacher from being fired, making the communist point about reliance on the working class, which "can keep us on the road to building a communist society"; an exposure of why the rulers want to maintain the health of certain workers to guarantee arms production and recruits for the military; how in Mexico the "Free Market and State Capitalism [are] Two Sides of the Same Coin, again exposing the social fascist nature of the union misleaders; and in an article on the "Jobless Recovery, how "capitalism and unemployment go hand in hand," including Marx's explanation of

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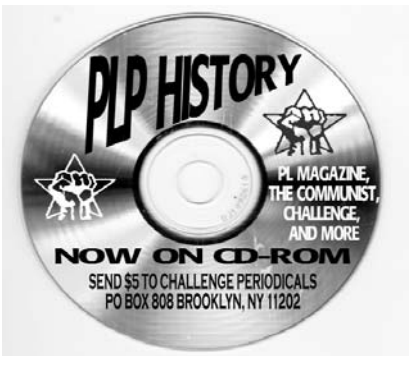
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letters cont.

how overproduction is intrinsic to the profit system and inevitably leads to unemployment.

Nov. 5 — An article on the LA transit strike exposes the union leaders as allies of the bosses and details PLP's activities on the picket lines; using CHALLENGE to initiate sharp but friendly exchanges with the strikers about communism and how to achieve it, not how to win reforms; PL'er defended by the workers when attacked by the bosses; a plan "to emerge from these strikes with a bigger, more active PLP,…more people reading and distributing CHALLENGE," with the task to steer this anger and militancy down the road to communist revolution."; an editorial on the California recall election, another indictment on lesser evil politics and stating that "Fascism will be defeated by the development of a revolutionary party among workers, soldiers, students and others, a massive task, but do-able." Another article on how the AFL-CIO leaders "Ape Hitler's Unions," again exposing them as agents of the ruling class; an article about Bolivian workers believing that "the whole system has to go," with some calling for a revolutionary party; an analysis of how overproduction is the basis of the crisis in the steel industry how only communism — not reforms — can solve this contradiction and how "the struggles of steelworkers remain fertile ground for building a new communist movement…that will know no borders"; an article describing the rising anger in the auto plants and how building unbreakable ties and spreading CHALLENGE'S communist ideas can turn class struggle into a mass base for communist revolution, but that "you have to be in it [the class struggle] to win it"; and a back-page article on how the communist-led forces of the Soviet Union shaped World War II.

We think that the preponderance of CHALLENGE articles "encourage…individuals and groups planning activity" to make building the Party and revolution, not reform, primary. Based on that we think it is an error to indict the entire Party leadership and membership based on this one, admittedly reformist article as "a leg up for PLP moving to the right." In fact, in that very Sept. 24 issue there is an article on page 3 which describes how Party forces in a hospital are trying to turn an anti-racist struggle into a fight to build the Party.

The struggle to raise communist politics in the class struggle is constant and often difficult. We cannot and should not minimize the danger of sinking into reformist politics, considering that historically this has been the major problem in the international communist movement. Perhaps sometimes we oversimplify it; many members are new to this fight for revolution, not reform, and we must collectively help each other in that fight, but we must participate in the reform struggle so that workers can take our revolutionary politics seriously. We think that the workers, soldiers and students to whom we bring CHALLENGE are getting a message that mainly puts forward revolution, not reform.

We welcome our readers' thoughts on this subject.

Stop Privatization of Public Housing

Over 450,000 people live in public housing in New York City, people who have nowhere else to live. The politicians would love to cut it back - the money could buy a lot of tanks - but they can't just get rid of it. However, they can chip away, so the NYC Housing Authority has started to implement a plan to privatize what they can and downsize the number of workers. with the union playing right into their hands.

The Authority¹s rationale is increased "efficiency" in construction (projects are consistently over budget). Their "solution" will award over $550 million to private construction firms and reorganize the staff into six separate divisions with a virtual disregard for job descriptions or civil service titles. The over-runs and inefficient bureaucracy are all too real, but are just a smokescreen. Given U.S. capitalism's international crisis, the plan meshes with the system's current trend to unravel social services - like public housing - and break whatever union benefits remain for the working class. They tout privatization as the most "efficient and cost-effective" way to accomplish anything. Yet private companies which take over social services always provide less services and pay lower wages. They also consistently use the sorry state of public housing to build racism and to blame workers for the lousy conditions.

The staff and tenants were completely out of the loop in the planning process. But the union's response was late, and tepid. After the plan was announced, Local 375 of AFSCME District Council 37 held only two labor/management meetings, allowing reorganization of the employees as "management¹s right." It was only when 60 members confronted the local president at a worker-organized meeting that the head of DC 37 contacted the Authority. The latter agreed to put the plan on hold while the union came up with a counter-proposal. Meanwhile, an ad hoc committee condemned the plan and is circulating a petition against it. There is growing worker opposition.

All this occurred despite the union, not because of it. After getting involved with the union, and seeing it in action (or inaction) it became easy to understand why CHALLENGE refers to union officials as misleaders and social fascists. Their job isn't to initiate struggle, it's to stifle it.

Struggle is possible - workers are angry at the Authority¹s heavy-handed and transparent attempts to cut their jobs - but for fight back to occur, we need to connect the dots back to the bosses' global crisis, openly expose the union's consistent deflating tactics, and provide the kind of militant organization that can oppose this attack and the profit system.

This particular struggle hasn't played out yet; if the local bosses and the financiers at HUD in Washington want privatization badly enough, they¹ll push it through. But the struggle against it is still vital, and if we don¹t lead it, we¹ll just watch the union hacks tell us, once again, that being sold out is the "best" we could hope for. *A City Worker*

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

On soup lines, no urge to vote

Across the American heartland, the lines of people at soup kitchens and free food pantries have lengthened dramatically. Some look like images from the Great Depression….

Few said they had any intention to vote. It made no difference, they said. I heard the same lines repeatedly: all politicians are the same; they care nothing for the working poor. (GW, 11/12)

US will control the new Iraq

Mr. Bush's aides insist that even after sovereignty passes to the provisional government, American influence will be strong. The United States military will have the heavy firepower. The $20 billion for reconstruction that Congress has approved will still be under American control, its flow directed to influencing events according to Washington's wishes….American investors will demand…a secular government and political stability before risking billions reconstructing the Iraqi economy.

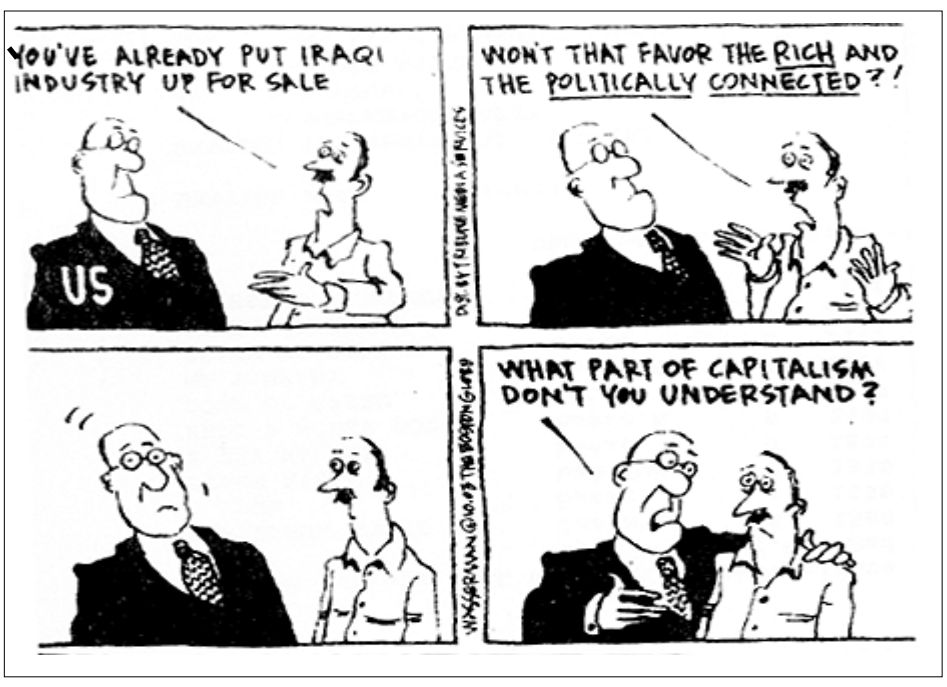
"We'll have more levers than you think, and maybe more than the Iraqis think," one senior White House official said this week. (NYT, 11/16)

US order: No GI coffins on TV

One of the lessons the U.S. government apparently learned from the Vietnam War comes down to this: Don't let the American public see coffins arriving home with U.S. casualties from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan….

In a move by the Bush administration to suppress distressing images of war, the Defense Department issued a directive last March on the eve of the U.S. invasion of Iraq that declared:

"There will be no arrival ceremonies for, or media coverage of, deceased military personnel returning…." Hearst Newspapers, 10/30)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US
WON'T THAT FAVOR THE RICH AND THE POLITICALLY CONNECTED?!
WHAT PART OF CAPITALISM DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

Bosses profit from "illegals"

To really stop illegal immigration, without greatly increasing legal immigration from poor countries, would mean wiping out the U.S. agriculture and garment industries, among others. To blame the workers, rather than the system they operate in, is the core hypocrisy our immigration policy has long been based upon….

Enforceable sanctions would be opposed by most major business associations because employers would no longer be able to find a vulnerable labor force to exploit….

Immigration laws have been rigged to favor certain skilled occupations, ignoring the reality that much of our prosperity derives from the sweat of unskilled immigrant labor. (LA Times, 10/29)

Bush rewrites Filipino history

"America is proud of its part in the great story of the Filipino people," said President Bush to a joint session of the Congress of the Philippines last week. "Together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule."

Unfortunately, we then killed more than 200,000 Filipinos. Almost all of the dead were civilians, killed in the two years after we liberated them from Spanish rule in 1898. One of our generals there, a cranky Civil War veteran named Jacob Smith, told his men: "I wish you to kill and burn….I want all persons killed who are capable of bearing arms in actual hostilities against the United States."

"How young?" asked Maj. Waller Tazewell Waller (cq) of the U.S. Marines. "Ten years and up," said Gen. Smith.

None of this was secret at the time. (Liberal Opinion Week, 11/10)

'People power" is never US aim

[Letter to the N. Y. Times]

Re: "Bush Asks Lands in Mideast to Try Democratic Ways"….

He might have apologized for the United States' support of the overthrow of democratically elected governments in Chile and Guatemala….

He "sought to position the American experiment in remaking Iraq alongside the United States' efforts to spread democracy in Asia after World War II." I don't know of any such efforts.

We either supported the defeated colonial powers (Britain, France and the Netherlands) or indigenous militarists and dictators like Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, Ngo Dinh Diem, General Suharto and Ferdinand E. Marcos….

President Bush may know nothing of these histories, but the people on the receiving end assuredly do. Chalmers Johnson (NYT, 11/10)

Nurses' long hours a danger

Many hospitals and nursing homes are endangering patients by allowing or requiring nurses to work more than 12 hours a day, the National Academy of Sciences said….

Such long hours cause fatigue, reduce productivity and increase the risk that the nurses will make mistakes that harm patients….

In one study for the government, 27% of nurses at hospitals and nursing homes reported that they worked more than 13 consecutive hours at least once a week….

Nursing assistants "work double shifts on a fairly regular basis" at some nursing homes. (NYT, 1`1/5)

FIGHT RULERS' RACIST IDEOLOGY

(*This is the concluding part of the article on racism that began in our Nov. 19 issue. It dealt with the need to have an "unswerving commitment to smash racism," described how capitalism invented racism and how racism lies at the core of the capitalists' ability to reap maximum profits. It showed how PLP fought racism in the shops and unions and analyzed the economic basis of racism, the first of its three components.*)

The second key component of racism is ideology. Racist super-exploitation could not survive without a smokescreen to justify it. The economic base, as Marx called it, needs a "superstructure" of ideas to make it appear rational and necessary. This ideology has assumed many forms throughout U.S. capitalism's brutal history. Native Americans were considered "savages," fit only to be killed. During slavery, the "Founding Fathers" and an army of scribblers considered people of African descent as three-fifths of a human being.

The triumph of industrial capitalism after the Civil War packaged this old poison in new bottles. Led by several generations of Harvard pseudo-scholars, racist theoreticians of the 20th century endorsed "biological determinism," the lie that genetic superiority or inferiority determine social behavior and hierarchy. If this filth resembles Hitler's ravings, it's no accident. The early U.S. "eugenicists" not only admired Hitler; they inspired him. The Nazis' racial laws of 1933 were modeled after U.S. scientists' "research" and recommendations.

After the world's anti-fascist forces defeated Hitler's Nazis in World War II, led by the Soviet Union and Josef Stalin, these academic racists had to lie low. But by the late 1960s, the "genes" gang made its comeback, with U.S. imperialism's Southeast Asian genocide in full swing, and militant rebellions by black and Latin workers rocking U.S. cities. While the forms varied, the message remained the same. The arch-racist Arthur Jensen wrote that black kids scored lower than whites on IQ tests because black people had "fewer genes for intelligence" than white people. Richard Herrnstein declared that "unemployment runs in the genes, like bad teeth." Edward Banfield blamed the racist conditions of ghetto life on black peoples' lack of "future orientation." All these "experts," and a host of others, had tight Harvard connections.

In 1975, Harvard ant specialist E.O. Wilson did Herrnstein one better with the publication of Sociobiology, claiming that genes accounted for everything, from business success to imperial conquest.

PLP led massive struggles exposing these racists, many times literally driving them off the stages of campus auditoriums, and preventing them from spewing their murderous garbage. But today, these racist "theories" about genetic inequality, particularly "sociobiology," are taught at leading universities.

Far beyond the campuses, the print and broadcast media have popularized this ideological trash, 24 hours a day, in the movies, on television, at sporting events, in books and magazines and daily newspapers. People absorb it without even realizing it. The historic struggle to destroy racism must include a systematic, uncompromising fight against racist ideology.

The third component of racism is the rulers' ultimate use of state power, to savagely enforce their racist ideology with the iron fist of police terror. During slavery, the entire South became an armed camp to guard against slave rebellions. Most of the U.S. military's officer corps continues to come from the South. More terror can be found in the brutal policing of the inner cities, which have the highest percentages of black and Latin workers. The U.S. prison system, the world's largest with a population of more than two million, is two-thirds black and Latin.

"The fight against racism requires mass revolutionary violence. Those workers and youth who understand this best are most open to joining and leading our Party."

The fight against racism requires mass revolutionary violence. Those workers and youth who understand this best are most open to joining and leading our Party. PLP's forerunner, the Progressive Labor Movement, cut its teeth by actively participating in the 1964 Harlem Rebellion against police terror. CHALLENGE became the flag of the rebels. PL members went to prison as a badge of honor for their participation.

In 1975 in Detroit, a rebellion erupted when a racist bar owner who catered to cops shot a black youth who worked for him. PLP was in the center of it, flooding the city with "wanted" posters, immersed in the rebellion in the evenings while holding daytime rallies at the auto plants and being watched by the police 24 hours a day.

In 1992, after the LA cops brutally beat Rodney King, PLP served on the front lines of rebellions against the racist police. Our May Day march defied a ban on demonstrations as we marched past, and fraternized with, the National Guard troops that had been called up to stop the rebellion, spreading revolutionary communist ideas in the heat of battle.

The PLP-led International Committee Against Racism led hundreds of thousands of workers and youth — from New York and Chicago to Tupelo, Mississippi, and California — in violent confrontations with the KKK and Nazis. We integrated Chicago's Marquette Park and drove the fascists back under their rocks. The overwhelming police protection that the big fascists give the little ones to this day is a compliment to our unending war on these racist terrorists.

As U.S. rulers move more ferociously to establish a fascist police state at home and expand their imperialist massacres abroad, all aspects of racism will intensify. Our Party will build on its long history of bringing revolutionary leadership to the fight against racism. Smash Racism with Communist Revolution!

(*Future articles: Nationalism — racism's deadly twin, the trap of "multi-cultural" identity politics, and how communists fight both racism and nationalism.*)

Forced Prostitution, Sale of Children Hallmark of Albania's 'Free Market'

Now that socialism has collapsed in Albania and free-market democracy has replaced it, they're selling 3-year-old children for TV sets! Only capitalism, a system based on profiteering from human suffering, could spawn that kind of "trade."

The Albanian family that sold their son lives in a two-room shack. The mother is forced to beg on the streets to provide for her other six children and is only one of thousands harassed by traffickers in human beings.

According to a report in the New York Times (11/13), an estimated 6,000 Albanian children "have been sent abroad for use in begging and prostitution rackets." Most are older children who are "rented" to pimps in Italy and Greece. One 14-year-old girl was married to a man from a neighboring town who took her to France and forced her into prostitution.

Sure, now that Albania helped U.S. rulers in the Kosovo war and allows the drug-dealing bandits of the KLA (Kosovo "Liberation" Army) to operate freely, Albania and Kosovo have become centers of some of the world's biggest drug-running and women slave-trading mafias.

The Times says this "trafficking is part of a larger trade in humans, including East European women shuffled through Albania for prostitution, and is an outgrowth of the misery and the organized crime that has blossomed" there.

The "crime" is capitalism. It's no accident that children are bought and sold into prostitution and begging on the streets when the profit system reduces them and their families to abject poverty. Enslaving children is merely an extreme example of the very foundation of capitalism. The wage system, treats all workers as commodities, to pay as little as possible for their labor and dump them on the scrap heap when they no longer can create the value from which the bosses reap their profits.

Interestingly, the Times notes that, "Over the past 12 years, since the collapse of 'Stalinism' here, a substantial trade in children has established itself in Albania." While Albania never had a true communist system, the Times admits that child slavery "blossomed" with the "collapse" of socialism and the emergence of full-blown capitalism.

Only the destruction of capitalism and the creation of a true communist society can free children and the entire working class from the kinds of horrors described above.✪

Defend anti-Nazi protesters!

On September 14, 2002, hundreds protested a Nazi "meeting" in the Beebe Library in Wakefield, Massachusetts. Wakefield's workers turned out en masse to totally reject racism and Nazism. Hundreds of local and state cops, federal agents and U.S. marshals had been mobilized to do their job: protect the racist Nazi terrorists and allow their unrestricted use of the supposedly "public" library, excluding all others.

Outside, a couple of Nazis wearing Hitler T-shirts provocatively approached and taunted the anti-racist demonstrators, inciting a series of minor scuffles. Several Wakefield residents confronted the Nazi scum, spat on them, tore up their signs and finally chased them out of town. Several hours later, agents of the state targeted one demonstrator, Ines Weiner, and took her into custody.

Ines, a Dominican woman, public school teacher and staunch anti-racist fighter, has been charged with "assault and battery with a dangerous weapon," disorderly conduct, and, most fascist of all, violation of the Nazis' "civil rights"! Ines's trial will begin December 15. She needs our help.

U.S. Bosses' Patriot Act Attacks All Workers

The U.S. Patriot Act gives the government new powers to wiretap phones, read our e-mail and search our homes. This and other laws form the legal basis of a fascist state similar to Nazi Germany. Already Attorney General Ashcroft has held many immigrants without charges. By imposing the most severe punishment on offenses tried in the federal court system, Ashcroft is leading judges and prosecutors at all levels to be less flexible on how to resolve cases and to impose ever harsher sentences. This will impact on Ines's case and make it more difficult to fight in court. The state's attack on Ines is part of this larger assault on workers, immigrants, students and black and Latin communities. It's an attack on all of us.

With mass unemployment, cutbacks, huge deficits and tax cuts for the wealthy, U.S. rulers are forcing working people to pay for the racist oil war in Iraq. When people fight back, the bosses then turn to Nazi groups, protecting and funding them, to allow them to recruit for their violently racist movement.

The Nazis arrive in town openly protected by the government for the sole purpose of organizing for racist terror. The Nazis who came to Wakefield — organized by the white-supremacist "World Church of the Creator" (WCOTC) — have a history of racist violence. George Loeb of the WCOTC is serving a life sentence for murdering Harold Mansfield, Jr., a black U.S. army veteran, in 1991. In 1999, Ben Smith of WCOTC shot eleven non-whites and Jews in Illinois and Indiana, killing two. In January 2003, the WCOTC rallied in Lewiston, Maine, openly attempting to mobilize "white citizens" against what their leader called an "invasion of the Somalis" and to drive these new immigrants from the city. Between Nazis like those who showed up in Lewiston and Wakefield, and the U.S. "Patriot Act," the state intends to terrorize all of us.✪

Fund-Raising Dinner for Ines Weiner

Saturday
December 6, 2003
5:30-8:00 PM

Third Avenue YWCA
30 Third Avenue
Brooklyn, NY